

LOVE POEMS

THIRD SERIES

REGINALD C. ROBBINS

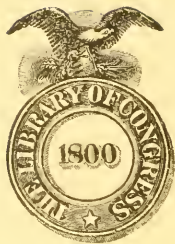


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LOVE POEMS

THIRD SERIES

REGINALD C. ROBBINS



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BARBARICS

BARBARICS

I

BELOVÈD ! along this Land of Barbary
Before all days of chronicle there dwelt,
As the tale goes, a people crude, uncouth,
And coy of trafficking, yet awe-compell'd
Toward honorable dealing with a world
Beyond their ignorance. And they — their goods
Depositing beneath the open sky
On favorable beaches by the salt,
White surge ; retiring landward then aloof
Through visit of the sun-born ships — would throng
To grasp (their guests being gone) such barter strange
As men's sophistication granted them.

LOVE POEMS

II

THEY nothing questioning, they grateful still,
Though some mere flaunted rag remain'd alone
In lieu of plumes and ivory and gold,
Their fruits of what sore labor ! For they dream'd
The great world as themselves in singleness —
So judging rightly ; for the world still gave
With fairness what their ignorance supposed
Not valueless because world's price in full.
And thus I, laying ivory and gold,
The fruit of my best labor, on the shore,
Retire before thy visiting and wait
What dross thou wilt : knowing thy coin is pure.

BARBARICS

III

FROM any other these barbarians
Had spurn'd the tinsel than that world at large
Beyond their beach and surges. From the herd
Of neighbor-ignorances had I scorn'd
Aught than a full surrender, song for song,
Spirit for spirit to eternity.
From thee — I doubt me ! I had thought thee erst
Some neighbor-wisdom. But I know myself
Uncouth before thy subtlety, ashamed
To meet thy stranger-hood and seek of it
A more-or-less of truth whose test I know not ;
To chaffer of thy chaff from over-seas.

LOVE POEMS

IV

BELOVÈD ! for that which comes from thee to me,
Although thou slight'st it with a trivial name
Of more-or-less, were absolute exchange
For all I offer thee ; to balance all.
Therefore that awe for honor in exchange,
For rectitude above all bargaining,
Establishes religion in the place
Of traffic, on the shore of merchandise
A dread depository of the gods,
A temple in the market. And the name
Of that thou bring'st, thine immanence divine
Of worldhood, lieth large on all this land.

BARBARICS

V

IN sooth, within myself I had not found
A sense of worship nor divinity ;
But in my mountains or my plains alike
Had roam'd a nomad — in default of thee.
But thou, indeed, fair opener of the East,
Thou, as the rising of the spirit-sun
O'er Africa, affordest to my soul
A Providence, a permanence at heart
Of domicile and inward dominance.
In shape of brazen Moloch though thou camest
Devouring in the furnace these mine offspring
Of song and soul, yet as a God wert thou.

LOVE POEMS

VI

AND though Astarte in His horrid train
Had minister'd to passion and been served
Of every bestial impulse erst unwaked
But haply flaming now in opulence
Of Tyrian purple and of pearl profane,
Yet were religion in me, and thy presence
A purification. That the worst of me
Is wide of outlook and of mastering faith,
Fit to push enterprise beyond the Pales
Of Herakles and boundaries of the world
Half-known. For I from ignorance am raised
By thee to be some leader among men.

BARBARICS

VII

BUT now the contest comes and I am slain ! —
Mine overweening arrogance of wealth,
For gratitude to thee, proclaim'd the world
Thy province and demanded that thy fame
Be honor'd and worshipp'd thereupon through all
The coasts whereto my merchandise in trade
Took voyage with the rumor of thy might.
But o'er thy Moloch rose thy mightier name ;
And I thy champion am from all Jove's seas
Driven and bodily by thee destroy'd. —
And in my desolation but look up
To dream new dim imperial dream of thee.

LOVE POEMS

VIII

A DREAM, as ghostly of thine earlier light
As dust-gray noontide is but ghost of dawn :
No fervor, nothing of the glory-hues
On cloud nor bursting sea-wave in the path
Of red-rich sun ; but only some small disk
In paleness (simulacrum of that blaze
Of morning) silver-whited as the dome
Of distant tomb upon Saharan sands.
For everywhere hath the siroccan blast
Blown and the sands of soul are over me.
And thou art empty of the spirit's worth.
For thou art Roman, mute, immovable.

BARBARICS

IX

YET even this thy mood imperial
(Impress'd upon my regions from without,
As in old days thine earlier traffickings
Impress'd their dominance), this very change
To pride and rigor in thy Providence
Exhibiteth unto my self-esteem
Mine own self-alteration; yea, a soul
Grown worldly-wise, sophisticated, sunk
Beneath all innocence. For I not now
Accept for proof of justice each decree,
Nor fancy charity and singleness
Beneath thy calm. I fear thy policy.

LOVE POEMS

X

AND when thy policy makes mock and sport,
Adopting for disguise of pagan pride
And sated sophistry the badge of Christ,
And calling thy love-stultifying code
The soul-regeneration taught of Him ;
When thou establishest upon my shores
The presbyters schismatic, and the crime
Of persecutions by the councillors,
And everywhere rebellions in the name
Of cant, and execrations customary,
Anathema under thy gospel law :
Then shrink I from all reverent thought of thee.

BARBARICS

XI

THOU hypocrite and tyrant unaware,
In name of love, oppressive to despise
Thy vassal State with surtax'd exilehood.
Well were it for me that the Vandal horde
O'erthrow thy hyperdominance and leave
Me naked, destitute, cast forth to wolves,
And craved of foul hyenas. For thy power
Is broken; destroy'd by those who with no thought
Of aught than plunder pillage all away
The paganhood, the Roman heathenness;
And bring thee, through destruction, finally
To possibility of some rebirth.

LOVE POEMS

XII

FOR thou, thou dost, one moment, offer me
Suggestion of thy splendor Byzantine ;
But find'st my spirit broken and my coasts
Habitantless, I being all burn'd and slain.
Though, since, hath some dark pirate-brood inflow'd
And fill'd these spaces with a rioting
Within what once was I ; and all my shores
And neighbor-plains must learn their peace anew ;
Who am some stranger in mine own domain ;
Who see some other than my wonted self
Concern'd in bloody feud and baseness there.
For I myself am ended anciently.

BARBARICS

XIII

PERCHANCE thou art returning with thy ships
And merchandise ; the modern world whole-known
Anew impressive on this Barbary
Of latter days ? But art thou that fresh spirit
Of early ages to mine innocent dawn ?
Or but some charnell'd effigy of hope ? —
I know not. Thou and I alike are changed ;
Alike have lived our African lost day ;
And, in its dust and whirlwind suffocate,
Experienced sink out of singleness —
To know suspicion and a safe distrust.
I love thee ; but would welcome not thy love.

LOVE POEMS

XIV

THIS Land of Barbary : it is not thine,
Hath outlived love-religion ; shrinks within
My desert fastnesses — though yielding thee
The seaports and the cultivable plains :
Itself uncultured as unconquerable. —
Forbear ! Shall I, my goods depositing
Upon salt beaches, at the last go crazed
With sentience of the chaff thou leavest there,
The flaunted rags for ivory and gold ?
Forbear ! I send thee song fit for thy song,
Spirit for spirit. But thine own, deny me !
Withhold communion ! — Lest I learn thy soul !

AN ENDING

AN ENDING

I

I HAVE loved thee, belovèd, so long and well,
So wholly hath my life belong'd to thee
And been thy daily breathings and thy thoughts
(My body and my mind alike thyself),
That there is somewhat not to be believed
In this thou tellest me, some dread mistake,
An error scarce ascribable to thee. —
If thou hast done this death unto my heart,
Hast plighted troth to any other troth
Than mine, assurèdly a wrong is wrought
Beyond imagination. For thy soul
Hath taken from me my soul without consent.

LOVE POEMS

II

I DREAM not that thou plightedst e'er thy troth
To me or gavest assurance to my love
Of loving recompense. But thou didst hold
Thy whole life open to my worship of it
Beyond least let or hindrance evermore,
Giving assurance that I still might love.
Nay, worse ; thou knewest that I, loving thee thus,
Rightly were self-assured. — When the first flash
Of flame towärd that other took fire in thee,
Thou shouldst have borne thy share of sacrifice
A little, and stifled an unseemliness ;
Not now demand me that I face thy fault.

AN ENDING

III

I AM pass'd-master in the art to evade
Full fall of disappointment : being in want
From my youth up of many a subterfuge,
If I would go uncrazed from dawn to dawn.
I had devised a Self wherein thy joy
Might semblance bear as 't were my very own
By much sophistication. I might learn
To dwell, despite heart's lethal injury,
In contemplation of thine happiness
Entering into mine unhappy heart
And still sustaining me about thy world.
But now my limbs swoon vague upon the earth.

LOVE POEMS

IV

I MIGHT achieve, beyond mere meriting
Of me or thee, to labor in the strength
Of ineradicable inward wrath
To rectify a world where wrath can be
In love's despite, where love can be despised
And thou canst flourish for reward of wrong.
The curse inexorable that I face
Might serve to fuse at a blast a world anew,
Cast our stone-absolute antagonism
To basis of some cosmic tragedy.
I might attain to hate, and move the world.
But now I love thee and myself am moved.

AN ENDING

V

I SPEAK not for my pitiful poor self,
Save as I love and so am deep and great
And have love's mighty rights to be maintain'd.
Thy trespass is upon the ground of soul,
Turning mine heart to strange unrighteousness
Which was so holy in the love of thee.
By these effects shall thine offence be judged,
Transgression measured by this fall of me :
Whose Law is changed to a forbidden thing.

Yet wilt thou vow : ' My love for him hath claim
' As his for me : beyond thy finite rights,
' Mutual criterion of morality ! '

LOVE POEMS

VI

I BLAME thee that thou didst not stifle love
At the first fume : who plead myself but love
For judgment on thee ! I, who point thy fault,
Brand thee but with the name of mine own sin !
It boots not to adduce the proven truth
My love was every hour so deep and strong
'T would serve for both, me, thee, and world beside,
Being within itself creative-whole !
It boots not to make boast of prior claim
By service long and honorably maintain'd
Through all repulse. Such privilege enjoy'd
But layeth on me mine obligation more.

AN ENDING

VII

AY, in that name of love which I did cite,
Lifteth before my spirit the love of thee
For him: demanding that the fact I hold
Of wreck and ruin, proving fault in thee,
Alter to some new strange nobility
Of absolute sacrifice, of love's self-end
In immolation, wiping out all stain
Of sin in thee with my surcease of soul.
The call hath come: My life, to purge from thine
The stigma of mine immorality,
Who, living, love thee loving elsewhere. —

Allow me to sink out of thee ashamed.

LOVE POEMS

VIII

THOU hast through every hour of all my love
Been but too gracious to my desperate need :
Forgiving all ; if nought thou yet couldst give.
Dó now this last grace that I ask of thee,
Forgive thou (as thou every while forgavest)
Even whilst thou hatest me. — For I forgive thee ;
And needs were, thou forgav'st even that at last.

I fix my faith upon thy years to-come
Of seraph-happiness, if so may be ;
Bless in my breast thy bitter memory —
Beyond that, nothing. I myself alone
Depart : no world before me where to choose.

AN ENDING

IX

EARTH'S outcast. — For unto myself alone
I now return and that which I find there :
Ashes, dismay and desolation as
Of some vast holocaust of shattering spheres.
No world beside. For thou wast my world all.

Yea, from the depths of that dumb lovelessness
Which preys upon the solitary years
Thy spirit lifted me to tell of truth
In universal tongue. The truth is told,
To the dark dregs. The last of all thy songs
Is sung, and endeth in a lost soul's wail :
Thy flaming sword the last truth I may know !

LOVE POEMS

X

THE song dies slowly. And its end of breath
Fain would be wasted in a mortal plea
For mercy, succor, for thy saving soul
Once more as formerly : when all its thought
Should turn toward absolution. Yea, its breath
Swoons slowly, for there is so much to say
Of uttermost confession contritely. —

Depart in peace, thou, if thou waitest still.
The rest is inarticulance and gasps.
The last grim grisly struggle to leave life
With decent dignity were scarce for thee
To hear — for that, I have loved thee too well.

MILLENNIALS

MILLENNIALS

I

THERE are who dream the world is growing old ;
Too like, indeed, unto a spent machine ;
They who themselves, like some spent mechanism,
Do dumbly feel unto themselves alone
A weariness and heart-ache of the world,
As one by one into the years of wane
Their hopes and their desires do waste away
Till all is wan and nothing wonderful
Of any that seem'd wonderful erstwhile,
Nor aim of hope nor hope-desire within them
More. And with these I lately was as one.
But now am otherwise, who hope in Thee !

LOVE POEMS

II

ALAS ! it were not as a mechanism
That world might weary and within herself
(As they within themselves who hope not in thee)
Grow old and tend toward the verge of death
Forewarning, palpable. For what machine —
Save by some pitiful figure of our speech —
May weary and faint upon the spirit's end
As did myself among those hearts self-spoil'd :
Hearts fashion'd not with hands, but each himself
Unto himself his own of origin,
Each one ? What mechanism were the soul
That seeth herself by her own fault foregone ?

MILLENNIALS

III

BELOVÈD, and hence the sorry tragedy
Of isolation eating at the heart
That dumbly suffers, forsooth, because in truth
She were not, could not be, as some machine
Whereof her weakness and decadence seem'd
A simulacrum. World were no machine
To spend itself uncognizant of death,
Nor reach the weakening of pale decay
Without an agony — as I with mine
Made sorry struggling through the years, ere thou
Camest like morning to the star-worn soul,
Mature unto thy watcher of the night.

LOVE POEMS

IV

THOU dayspring ! and thou youth of all the world
Immortal by life-sacrificial grace
Instant-eternal to the uplifted heart
Of him who greets thee ; him no longer dumb
But overbursting with thy harmony !
Thee the melodic utterance of the world
Greets in the soul of me to make thee see
The marvels of thy making : who alone
Hast proven desire alive and hope, like light,
Our heritage ; thyself who, though of earth,
Speak'st with the mouth of angels, ay, with voice
Of heaven, prophetic in thine immanence.

MILLENNIALS

V

OUT of the mouth, I ween, of innocence
Is strength ordain'd and wisdom to the wise
Beyond their wisdom : as thy loveliness
Leans out of heaven to herald the sweet day !
The soul, although mature, is as the world
Young yet forever ; and the tragedy
Relegate now at last unto the past ;
And hope hath meaning to futurity :
A hope the sweeter, loftier, deeplier felt —
In contrast of the foregone pessimism ;
A conquest self-assured but that the night
Hath been, which now is no more anywhere.

LOVE POEMS

VI

THERE are, beloved, who would assure me yet
How night ensueth on the fairest day ;
How, as the waning of the stars did spring
To thee indeed, so yet a waning comes
Even of thyself, that there be night anew
Ten thousand times more sombre, tenebrous
By poignant deprivation ; and an age
More hideously deathward but that life
And hope and high desire have been through thee !
They little know the wisdom which transcends
Their gross interpretance material :
The spirit of love perpetual in thy face !

MILLENNIALS

VII

THE spirit-principle involved, by proof,
In thee, in any system which could bring
Thee to perfection and itself in thee !
The doctrine of a worth intrinsic
Unto itself and unto all things else
In all thou lightest or that look on thee.
Therefore am I, or world, not night at wane
Nor daylit earth to wane at eve, but one
Reciprocal inspiration as of love
Which prospers either by the breath of each :
So scarce may perish ! Such the spirit is
Which taketh up the tale of truth with thee.

LOVE POEMS

VIII

OH, from the first thou walkedst, though alone,
Serene in love and utter loveliness.
And this thy heart-heaven-opening hath but been
An evolution and a ripening
Of prescience aye inherent. From the first
Dost thou and thou alone explain the world.
Even heart's sickening and the gross decay
In dogmatism material can but be
Self-comprehended by thy truth of love,
Fore-implicate in yearning lightlessly
Unto the dawn, that doth declare all things
While lapping all in thy light-comforting.

MILLENNIALS

IX

AND if of thy millennium they may say
The world 's unworthy, disregarding proof
Of innermost inherence of thy soul
Within us (that our very fault, at worst,
Of mock-despair finds ground in need of thee
Inherent to thy worldship !) — then must I
Accept my worthlessness as proof of thee,
Sure aspect of the system of thy soul
Which, being all-sacrifice, salvationwise
Requireth of her world a world to save :
And therefore saves not as by miracle
But as by nature of our worthlessness.

LOVE POEMS

X

THE wonder were, belovèd, had the world
Been not unworthy, had there been a way
By merit to achieve millennium !
Now, dear, 't were nature, and not miracle.
For this were nature : that the world should want
Salvation, being encumber'd of the sin
Of worldhood ; and that thou shouldst 'spoil thy soul
For infinite grace of granting world a soul
In sheer self-immolation — as thou art
Beyond me, yet by love my God-within !
Had I been worthy to receive thy love,
The wonder had precluded loving thee.

MILLENNIALS

XI

'T WERE wonder thus sufficient, that thou seest
The marvels of thy making yet self-made —
In nature of the self-response to thee
Of that eternity of life-in-death,
Which thine imperishable sacrifice,
Of self in grace towärd my world of need
And sin of worldhood, self-establishes,
For heaven and wonder, through the ways and
works
Of love the self-creator. No 'machine'
Devolves to senseless ruin senselessly,
Nor any tragedy obtains: though earth
Be growing old. For age is more-of-thee.

LOVE POEMS

XII

EARTH'S age were thus the fraught experience
Of soul's best possibilities, of heart's
Enthusiasm, self-desirous aye
And disappointed never of the love
And linkage of thy spirit; as our life
Is mutual-responsive utterly.
There are who say the world is growing old —
Too like, themselves, unto some spent machine
In inappreciation. But I too
Declare world old in self-experience
Of youth, of cumulation, ay, of thee;
Richer by every hour of heaven's day.

HYMENEALS

HYMENEALS

I

THE daily sweetness of this life with thee
And nightly wonder: these the sun and stars
Duly attest. Their risings and their settings
Are witness hourly to the light of thee
As of thy love, thy love lighting the world.
Thus as the sun and stars thy risings and
Thy lyings down are life unto the world,
Its motion and its impulse. In thy peace,
Passing all understanding of the spheres,
May earth or star or sun alike perform
Its perfect function. And within thy peace
I ponder of the life of sun and stars.

LOVE POEMS

II

FOR in the peace past understanding springs
The wisdom of serenity, the sight
Beyond mere sight of stars or suns or earths,
Beyond sphere-wisdom, penetrating things
With sweet suffusion of the spiritual.
Not nature now, but in all natural truths
Thy truth of nature, thy suffusion, Sweet,
Irradiating and ethereal :
Transforming to an intropermeance
Unlike mere space-projection — I with thy truth
Transfused, irradiated and transform'd
To somewhat of thy spirit: that I see.

HYMENEALS

III

IT were not that the world without us twain
Hath swept in stark vacuity away,
And we left staring. Sun and stars are yet
And earth to stand on under day and night :
As ever was ; as ever shall be now.
But, where all suns and stars were shaken with
The whirlwind of my passion and would pass
To chaos disestablish'd ; there thy love
Hath reestablish'd heaven within this earth
In lasting function of a firmament.
And space is order'd ; and its motions are
Thy life and mine, self-lumined, self-distinct.

LOVE POEMS

IV

WHEREFORE this rehabilitated scheme
Of earth, this system of the sun and stars
Made over new in image of thy soul,
Invites the serious scrutiny of one
Long used to meditation though without
The light internal as vouchsafed me now.
And to this serious scrutiny of things
Thy light impels me, lest it fall to waste
For any want of truths illuminable
Within me to thy lamping. So I scan
And search the meaning of this cosmic scheme
Proved intropermeable of thy soul.

HYMENEALS

V

SO from the first (if any first there be
Of unbegun, interminable time
Or life unbounded in its inwardness),
So from the first must there at least have been
Some mutualism, some inter-response
Of stuff to stuff, pre-constituting soul.
Howbeit there seem'd but thou and I, apart
And several one from one as any star
From any star ; yet by the logic-sign
Of me and thee, of being but each distinct
Each stuff of starhood, stood intended aye
Love's self-response, thought's interpenetrance.

LOVE POEMS

VI

AND thus from hour to hour as we did grow
More self-aware (as any star or earth
Or creature each of earth did cumulate
Experience of selfhood severally)
Must every hour of novelty involve
A reinterpretation of the old,
A novel understanding ; must the past
Of space-position's externality
Prove no mere passing, but its dissipance
Exhibiteth unto the new love-mood
The old love-inkling. And the world hath grown
Great step by step but by self-potency.

HYMENEALS

VII

'T IS true that love's awakening 's gone-by
Even as the dayspring and the early life
Of nebule nuclear, which only seem'd
Sweet in itself maybe but promising
No wonders of the noon's humanity —
'T is true ; but in the passing it hath gain'd
The love-interpretance, the human mood
Which shows it to itself a seed of love
And forecast of an high intelligence.
Though we have lost, like earth, our severalty
Of independence, yet the acknowledged loss
Transforms the lost to value that hath been.

LOVE POEMS

VIII

VALUE that otherwise were 'neath esteem,
Were nothing for remembrance : that our past
Had never seem'd worth living, could not now
Be basis of earth's high self-cherishing !
That we are dear each unto each, that truths
Of earth are self-felt, spiritual, springs
Not solely in the moment's rapture, rests
In estimation of the past now proved
Worth love's appreciation. As we came
From self-respect, as earth did never lack
Of fact distinctive, can we truly yield
A worthy union and a mutualism.

HYMENEALS

IX

AND spirituality is but the name
New-given for the self-respect of old ;
And man's humanity but nature-fruit
Of nebulosity. 'T is true, that with
Each operation of the interplay,
Of self-transfusion and the act of thought,
Still wanes out of our humanism, Love,
The old self-mastery. The mystery
Requires the sacrifice. We are not now,
Nor earth, nor star, nor creature of them all,
Quite thou nor I, quite star nor earth nor man. —
But we are that which every truth would be.

LOVE POEMS

X

THOUGH scarce for final nor for final state
Of love's development interminable
Precluding possibility of pause !
From love to love must love ever remove
Its present-felt perfection ; as all earth,
Though in each creature earthlily fulfill'd
And inwardly triumphant, may not cease
Its soul-recomplication, groweth still
To novel triumph ; even so our love,
At every moment perfect, waxeth with
The further time's perfection — inwardly
The same fulfilment, ever to evolve.

HYMENEALS

XI

AND need we fear, or earth, a waning-time
When ebbs the tide and every emptiness
Lies bare and putrid to the taste of death
Because of acme and accomplishment
Which by some law of sad reaction must
Become relinquishment and vanishing ?
Because we wholly love (and earth is man),
Must we expect that life's superlative
Must cease, and drouth succeed humanity ?
Perchance the fear had held, if only less-
And-more of earthhood had preceded man,
If merely thou or I had ever been.

LOVE POEMS

XII

BUT, faith, 't is otherwise. Sith we have proven
Humanity in any cosmic stuff,
Love-triumph in the fact of thee and me
Recognizant, distinct whilst several, thus
May man assume, or love, that by each step
Of cosmic alterance, despite the loss
Of severalty and the power of each,
Springs evidence of soulhood. And the loss
Proves but a name for love-development
By realization of the mutual self. —
Wherefore no loss of any power of thee
Or me, or earth, but is some proof of growth.

HYMENEALS

XIII

AND growth being, as we know, the perfect love,
The absolute humanity, so nought
Of waning would be otherwise than erst:
One aspect merely and a name of soul —
Her self-aborrence of mere self-respect,]
Her self-conatus unto mutualism.
Earth hath its growth, its humanhood, throughout
Its incident impenetrable ; soul
Her involution though the star turn ash.
And in her self-fulfilment thrive all things,
As every act were a more perfect love
Unto the term of truth interminable.

LOVE POEMS

XIV

THEREFORE, with worship unforebodingly
Of any world-degeneration, with
An heart uplift unto divinity,
I chronicle thy coming and thy care
Of earth and me, thy cosmic providence.
For, like the luminous enrapture of
The elemental nebulæ, thy life
Became as mine, or seem'd so to become,
Whilst nuclear distinct. And thou hast been,
Though not myself, this principle of peace
Unto my yearning; that which earth or star
Senseth within of godhood for its own.

HYMENEALS

XV

A PROPHECY had been how to my life
Of chaos would a formulation come
Natural, universal, personal
As any god-suffusion ; that my truth
Of man, by warrant of the woman-need
In uttermost fulfilment, might achieve
An high normality, completion by
The complementation of thy womanhood.
A prophecy had been, but unbelieved.
Yet, ere I knew thy presence, to my heart
Had come thy heart and had abided there
Unknown, and grown the nature of my soul.

LOVE POEMS

XVI

'T IS thus with any cosmos, that its form
Achieves itself transfusèdly, unlike
An outward imposition ; till the gleam
Of inwardness declareth inmosty
The crystallization. Thy truth crystal-like
(Primordial rudiment of organism
Earth-immanent) proclaim'd thee to my truth
The wisdom, clarifying my world all :
Even as some sea and sky, made firmament. —
And of thy speech my speech acknowledged
 straight :
' The woman knoweth ; and is come to turn
' Mine ignorance to knowledge of itself.'

HYMENEALS

XVII

THE clear sea brimm'd beneath us with a beam
Of depth auroran ; and the conscious sky
Received into its height the searching gaze
Of thee and me, and recompensed it there
With crystal meaning. And the chaos-flood,
The pathlessness and poignance of the night
Within me, burst in azure on thy brow
And in thine eyes crystalline recompensed
Years of misunderstanding ; yea, being told,
Was comprehended. And intelligence
Brimm'd as the sea and sky betwixt us both
About us, bathing both in blessèdness.

LOVE POEMS

XVIII

AND (as the crystal morning of the world
Before the passion of its plasma was)
Seem'd self-declared though as without self-heat
The mutual insight, truth demark'd from truth.
Within me was the firmament, a sky
O'er-arch'd in clarity above a base
Illimitably broad, blue-luminous
And liquid with the new-won immanence
Transfusing every deep limpidity.
And if thou wast the light of the sun that wrought
This crystal marvel to mine ignorance,
I knew 't was thou, wast firmament as well.

HYMENEALS

XIX

AND also within thee, so thou hast said,
Though sun and firmament thou wast in me,
Seem'd similar awakening, a sense
Of clarification and of truth by me —
I within thee some sun, some sea and sky
Of fair fluidity, establishment
Like unto morning, keen without self-heat
Yet formal crystalwise ; the sky from sea,
Yea, both from light that wrought the truth of both
Distinct, yet perfectly transfused with sight
Of that I brought thee — the discerning soul.
Thus thou and I declared soul to herself.

LOVE POEMS

XX

AND thus for days or hours (the ages of
Earth ere earth bore the plasma of self-heat),
For days or hours, I wot not which, there dream'd
This mighty morning of a mutual love.
Love ever from the first, love ere we knew
Love's imputation, love by self-respect
Of either truth alone, now each distinct
By mutual relation. Sea and sky
(Discover'd of sun's fiat) wax'd to warmth,
Warmth gradual, suffusive; and within
The warmth evolved the germ; inly to both,
The phyton-organism vegetant.

HYMENEALS

XXI

FOR as some fervid forest 'neath the rays
Of old primeval suns, or torridwise
The associant unction of the cellule born
Of plasma pulsan and self-functional,
Did thou and I, evolving each in each
A fervor, spring associative twain
Upwards beneath the tropic sky, like growth
Of greenery self-contain'd in ardor, yet
Conative cell to cell agglomerant.
Loneliness, undiscover'd of that truth
Call'd firmament, betwixt the firmaments
Drew each to each in organism there.

LOVE POEMS

XXII

THUS had the world achieved its forest-truth,
Its self-intelligence of crystal form
Absorb'd, diffused and brought to functioning
Associant, conative. Thou, both, and I,
Sprung upwards to the light, each within self
Found satisfaction by the counter-self
Associant. And warmth within us both
Began pulsation. And the forest-forms
Of swarth palm-tracery and umbrage dim
Inwoven of wonder-flowers all around
Seem'd image of our intercourse, our speech
More intimate-inwoven hour by hour.

HYMENEALS

XXIII

AS sea and sky unto the forest-pulse
Remain for crystalline formality
Without them, while within the dim sap-cell
Worketh a wisdom operant beyond
Their vision'd clarity, so on thy word
And in thy fair and sweet intelligence
My spirit lived, feeling the fair and sweet
For wise assurance ; whilst none less the world
Gleam'd limpid, instant to intelligence
Erst dubious : intelligence even now
(Save for the sense of wise assurance gain'd)
Prey but to loneliness' self-diffidence.

LOVE POEMS

XXIV

BUT with the sense of need grew pace by pace
The sure association ; with the cell's
Instinctive inference of firmament
And want of sun and suction to its life
Wax'd means of satisfaction through the growth
Of fair agglomeration outwardly.
Earth did achieve, unto the ends of love
Ever within it as informing germ,
Not merely first the clear formality
Of morning sea and sky, but, at the need,
The noon of fervor and the generous green
Of truth assuaged in truth-society.

HYMENEALS

XXV

THUS thou and I together grew among
Those fervid isles. And our companionship
Became a greenery, beneath the sun,
Of vegetant dependence. And the fronds
Of many a filmy interwoven arch
Combined our spirits ; and the beauty-blooms
Of mutual confidence burst sheath about us
And in our souls made pleasant paradise ;
As earth before the advent of the curse
Of passionate animation. — Not that earth,
Nor confidence nor truth of firmament
Were passionless ! For all are names of love.

LOVE POEMS

XXVI

BUT, that in growth of earth or human soul
Cometh a season of perfervidness ;
The hours just past the noon ; the plasmic pulse,
Permitted self-perpetuance animate
By perfect function of amalgamance ;
An adolescence of the cosmic frame
(Before the peace of eve-maturity
And spirit-sight past understanding) ; cometh
That mighty need perfectly to possess
And wreak the purpose of a progeny —
Else fail in dissolution, self-despair
And loneliness past cosmic sufferance.

HYMENEALS

XXVII

EARTH'S hour had come ; the unction animate
Of plasm had burst the vegetative bound
(Not passionless, because some name of love ;
Yet casual chiefly and agglomerant).
The rich perfervor of the cosmic hour
Of adolescence was upon our souls,
Self-forced unto desire to be possess'd
And wreak thereby to perpetuity
A self-possession. At an instant's touch
Fired the plasmic pulse associant
To passion-animation. And the earth,
Or soul, stood peopled to astonishment.

LOVE POEMS

XXVIII

WE loved, as in our meaning we had come
To self-confession, mutual consciousness
Of polarism organic ; thou and I
Essential each to each ; the cosmic form
Of firmament, the vegetative pact
Of plasma-function, germ-companionship,
Resolved to union and amalgamance
Whilst none less self-distinctive. And the poles
Of thee and me, by heat precipitate,
Confronted each the other as with force
Of confluence essential, needing each
Heart's uttermost surrender — would we live.

HYMENEALS

XXIX

THEREFORE the world took on the passion-face
Of human yearning. The civility
Of forest-interarch took on the stress
Of civilization ; that betwixt us two
Stood humanist convention separating
From satisfaction soul's new-conscienced need.
Creation groan'd that through earth's animate
Love-leading came the sad-won sense of sin
Potential ; came necessity to pause
Before the soul-regeneration, wait
The course of world-adjustment ere the spirit
Unite to heaven on earth and chasten'd peace.

LOVE POEMS

XXX

THE haunts of men were all about us now,
Earth's civilization, ay, and humanism.
And in our hearts an higher humanism
Repress'd, half-hearten'd by the ways of a world —
Ways recognized, deeplier than ere these hours,
For righteous in conventionality.
Convention, man's protectorate of man,
Lay heavily upon us, that within
Were stern suppressions, self-pretence at strength
Half-independent. Yet the period
Of earth's adjustment and heart's biding-time
But served soul-recapitulation well.

HYMENEALS

XXXI

FOR, sooth, the soul, once sprung to see herself
In earth's environment, must find within
The microcosm. And thy soul and mine
By reason of the self-repression still
From perfect union and possession, grew
Familiar of the lesser ways of life
Within world's mutual circuit, did examine
By conscience of new-won enthusiasm
All erst-won informations — from the first
Of nebule nuclear the gamut run
Of evolution through the life of each :
Erst several, now mutually whole.

LOVE POEMS

XXXII

AND thus anew we builded up our souls
From their foundations, finding each in each
And through experience by strength of love
New valuations ; that, like earth by light
Of love-evaluation, proved all years
Of past soul-singleness some seed of love
And proof of mutuality. How sweet
The disregarded days of childhood ; ah !
The lonelier *Wanderjahre* rich with store
Of strange romanticism as earth's days
Revived of protocryptic flowerets fossil'd
And uncouth quaint palæosauriï !

HYMENEALS

XXXIII

HOW sweet their obsolescence in the wonder
Of mutual modernity and faith
In future beauty of amalgamance !
How fair the reminiscence ! For our souls
Day by day more conform'd within themselves
Each to the absolute informing force
Of either, proven self's alter-inference
And objectivity of spirit-world.
The world within unto the world without
Made symphony ; and the remember'd past
Sustain'd the expected harmonies, resolved
Through sane suspension. That our faith would sing !

LOVE POEMS

XXXIV

SO, when the days of earth's convention came
To termination and the moment was
Of world-regeneration, stood our souls
Mature, replete within with every type
Of all creation's yearning ; microcosm
With microcosm grew amalgamate
And enter'd on the pure possessive strength
Of uttermost surrender — each a world
By inmost involution ; valuing
And self-evalued ; ready for the test
Of definite eternity through all
Time-alterations of the common weal.

HYMENEALS

XXXV

FOR hitherto had each event at best
Seem'd temporal merely, truth succeeding truth
Displaced, despite the informing love therethrough ;
And moment unto moment, of itself,
Succeeded presently with scarce regard
For universal bearing. But ; with sense
Of perfect perpetuity by force
Of mutual possession, passionate
Inference toward objective progeny
In every act possessive ; came at last
Earth's sense of wholeness, world's self-inference,
Realized of the instant by the marriage-bond.

LOVE POEMS

XXXVI

FOR therein by the marriage of true souls
Absolves the sin-stain of possessiveness ;
And self-appropriation but provides
The perfect freedom ; for within our world
We stood, two worlds at one ; self-reconciled
Unto all counter-objectivity
Within love's all-subjective. And I took
Thee to myself and, making thee my wife,
But gave thee all of me. And we as one,
Though outwardly distinct, pass'd out of earth
(That earth of thee and me and merely man)
Into the life of earth's millennium.

HYMENEALS

XXXVII

AND therefore with an heart uplift and spirit
Inspective, apperceiving of the ways
Of star or sun, of firmament, or plasm,
Yea, and of animate passioning and sin,
I chronicle the ways of God-in-man,
The eternal involution presently
Within our daily greetings ; knowing well,
Thy risings and thy lyings down for truths
Of universal perpetuity
By moralism, love-exonerating
The passion and perfervor, plasmic pulse
Or firmamental ardor of the spheres —

LOVE POEMS

XXXVIII

ALL yearning upward, all attaining thee,
And in thee self-attain'd beyond relapse
Or fear of isolation. For all things
In thee and in thy soul-morality
Rise beyond need of propagation, feel
The eternity beyond mere progeny,
Achievable in world-acknowledgment
By love-inception. That our whole world sings
The human way of won divinity,
Projects self objectwise upon the face
Of the chaos-indeterminate, to prove
Determinism self-controll'd of Art.

HYMENEALS

XXXIX

FOR lo ! we have seen earth's indeterminism
Of chaos self-confronted to the form
Of firmament, and have through firmament
Risen to civilization and respect
For personality, intelligence
Determining the truth-humanity
In indication of the life of love.
And love we have seen declared in love's first
 phase
Of clarification, else of passioning
And ripe possession — personality
Absolved in personalism mutual ;
And progeny — for some eternity.

LOVE POEMS

XL

BUT in the chronicle whose text is love
Springs the achievement myriadwise beyond
That first possessive proof of moralism.
In the love-moralistic life of thee
And me in proved possessive self-response
Thrive multiple possibilities of act,
Act spiritually superior
In the mutual-self's expression of regard
For universal soulhood. If such act
Of personal propagation first declared
Truth's world-divinity, yet in that wisdom
Aspires indeed, though scarce attains, the God !

HYMENEALS

XLI

AND so — love lending the criterion
By force of recognition in the soul,
Through fruit of action, of the objective worth
Unaltering, everlasting to the fact
Of mutuality and influence
(Of self-felt alterance beyond the self) —
Begins the spirit-life, evaluation
To every act by comprehension through
Insight of purposed import. And each act
Stands judged, self-judged, in virtue of degree
Attain'd of self-responsibility,
Through works, for purposed import world-express'd.

LOVE POEMS

XLII

THE need were for the alter-inference
Of the self-recomplication — not the body
Begun anew by blend as of two strains
Themselves supposed establish'd and thereby
Render'd susceptible of iterance ;
But rather the spirit, through self-sympathy
For every purposed import, comprehending
The world's love-mood and furthering therethrough
The interplay and process of all souls :
Through rendering intelligible aid
Unto the understanding presently
Of thee and me and of the earth of each.

HYMENEALS

XLIII

FOR thereby is responsibility
Acknowledged, not for mere perpetuance,
But thus best for the alteration ever
Evolved through each recomplication of
The inherent interplay. And thus is earth
Through thee and me, as we through each and
 earth,
Further'd in evolution, process, by
Love-mutuality ; the term of self
(Truth's sole self-cognizant criterion)
Extended by the comprehension through
All possible imports and all processes
Sprung of the primely mutual moralism.

LOVE POEMS

XLIV

AND thus (for, of all purports, that we call
Song affords most of comprehensive strength
By recognized responsibility
For alteration of the face of things
Effectual in a self-projection through
New form discover'd !) — thus our mutual life
Resolves itself to loftiest unrest
(And peace thereby most perfect) in the voicing,
By words, of wingèd serious intent
Utter'd to ease the spirit of its strength
Of universalism, its sense through thee
Of insight into lives of sun and stars.

HYMENEALS

XLV

SUCH were the life of sun and stars, then, Sweet !
A life like ours which we have sweetly lived
And live forever by the law of growth
Through mutuality unendingly !
Such were the life of sun and stars ; the singing
Of order'd purport, of self-inference
By insight inwardly essential to
The being of either ; as of me or thee.
Life of the universe stands proven in thee
And in our intercourse ; thy lyings down
Or risings all alike inform'd of song
Splendid with import of earth's infinite.

LOVE POEMS

XLVI

FIRMAMENTS spring within thee ; and in thee
The function-vegetant ; the social pulse
Of plasmic fervor ; and the passioning
Transcended ; yea, the animate primal sin.
And civilization springs regenerate,
The human-won conventionality
Turn'd universal in its inference
Of comprehended other-purposes
Interminably to the term of growth.
These things in thee I sing, as thou art love.
And in the singing cometh all our peace
To procreation past the ways of earth.

HYMENEALS

XLVII

TO procreation spiritually
Perfected ; self-projection, through the truth
Of mutuality, upon the ways
Of earth or star or sun ; proclaiming thee !
Song have I made in darkness heretofore
For want of thee and thine illumining,
Song verily — for all its partial sight,
Its loneliness and emptiness of heart —
Song of the spirit but because it sang
The love-need and the prophecy of thee !
So, love, shall song be song though the soul faint
And fall to future ash with sun and star !

LOVE POEMS

XLVIII

THE life of song abides, betwixt us both
An infinite expression. And all things
Unendingly contribute to the song
Its intimate purport, as their moralism
Responds unto intelligence of truth.
Within our symphony each hour is art,
Love's self-projection seen by understanding
And utter'd in the converse of our souls
Interpreting the years of thee and me
By cosmic imagery. — The song begins ;
And ends not though the final word be sung.
Here, love, the word reacheth finality.

PATERNALS

PATERNALS

I

BELOVÈD ! because thou bearest 'neath thy breast
The life unborn that unto future time
Shall mean my life and thine and be for us
A subsequence and symbol wearing, sooth,
A frame as ours commingled ; and that thou holdest
The mystic-felt perpetuation of
My spirit in thine ; whilst very time stands still
Brooding the perpetuity : behoves it
That blessing of a song from out my breast
Befall thy spirit, I brooding there with thee
(After annunciation, ere the birth)
For love : my song big with the burden of thee.

LOVE POEMS

II

BIG with thy labor as we look for it,
Awaiting calmly, quietly the hour
Of the new life's release ! For thus will song
And birth-beginning to thy motherhood
(As erstwhile my paternity, with thee)
Be brought together in a beauty blent
Of utmost opposition, polarwise
Reconciled sans confusion ; as thy child
Blends in a beauty-bourn of innocence
My plangent passion, thy serenity,
So may this song upon the coming birth
Perform the miracle of benison !

PATERNALS

III

FOR neither song alone unto our life
Were bless'd, nor procreation. For of song,
Though therein best the spirit moveth ever,
Breathes and hath being, yet is all the world
Therein ('soe'er the insight earn'd of moods
And purposes of all things, ne'ertheless)
Purely ideal : whilst our very frame
Hath want environmental, craves response
Reäl, self-independent lest we rave.
Though of a procreation nothing seems
Spiritual sheerly ; and the lust hath need
Of love-expression lest it sink ashamed.

LOVE POEMS

IV

'FAITH, of that fire which heart still finds so fair
Must love, the mutualizing of two minds
Alembicwise through life-community,
Be the main purpose purifying aye
The privy fervor of the raptured flesh.
For in the procreation lurks at best
A fault, false-duplication of the one,
Some simulation of the self unique,
Soul-supererogation, making world
Image, not definition of the mind,
A reäl sheerly. But within our love
Springs comprehension and the stuff of song.

PATERNALS

V

SPRINGS comprehension of the twain-in-self,
And warrant of commingling ; whence a song,
Self's very twain-expression (being of both
World and the soul, breath yet and spiritual),
Coming from me to thee and in thee merging
My love for thee, sings warrant in itself
Of the heart-purity, companionship
Which gives it being. Wherefore, as that first
Paternity beyond mere lovelessness,
Behold this second fatherhood, this proof
Of love beyond lust. That the birth may be
Bless'd, and the spirit of both be on the babe.

LOVE POEMS

VI

AND thus unto thy patient motherhood,
Calmly expectant, may this solemn hymn
Seem something of lustration, a birth-gift
Of that which nothing in me yet hath given
To the new life, a spiritual peace
Of serious insight, sense of beauty through
The ways of men and earth. May that turmoil,
Which heritage of the passion-fervor'd flesh
In fatherhood hath foster'd, yield within
The fresh-made innocence to influence
Of song in thee ; and so my fatherhood
Be spared of shame : seeing the babe as thee !

PATERNALS

VII

FOR it would seem as though the life of song
Were alway thine ; and only within me
Could rage the pitiful fever of the world,
And only from my loins might still descend
To generations in futurity
The tempest and the heart-ache and the pain
Of deep desire and doubt to torture it.
For solely through the art and part of song,
The stimulus of beauty felt within
All precincts of the earth and human souls,
Solely by song had seem'd a sense of peace
In me. But thou seemest of peace compact.

LOVE POEMS

VIII

THYSELF the guerdon and the best birth-gift
Which heart could wish to any child of man !
Thyself creator, if the world be made
In any guise thine image, of a breed
Of beauty spiritual, nobility
No lower than of angels. For the man
Who springs of thee springs of a womanhood
Which knoweth to assuage the driven soul
With draught of heart's elixir ; and to build
On ruins of o'erwrought desire the dome
Of daily satisfaction. That thou seemest
Thyself song ; and thy spirit the hope I sing.

PATERNALS

IX

THEREFORE with song as it is soul of thee
My soul draws nigh the cradle of the babe
Purified and exalted ; by thy peace
Myself peace-fill'd, and capable by thee
Of ministration now sans sacrilege.
How needs the birth lustration ? 'Tis thy spirit
Speaks in the benison ; and mine, by thee
Regenerate, which blesseth ! Whence the babe
Draws of the motherhood an unmix'd peace :
Both by the brooding of the time in thee
Till thy fulfilment, and by proof, within
Our love, of fatherhood by thee redeem'd.

LOVE POEMS

X

And so, without sense of the pain foregone
Nor of the frenzy of the passioning
Precedent, nor of any old dismay,
Nor fear of love's futurity, we brood,
Both, as one spirit conjoin'd upon the birth ;
In soul as song auspicious and serene —
For all the sense of life-perpetualized,
Of pain and passion brought unto rebirth
By parentage' responsibility.
Responsible to futurity indeed
Are we, creators of a race to-come ;
But undismay'd who know the seed of peace.

PATERNALS

XI

FOR peace, heart's best wish to posterity
Was sown within thee with the father-seed
As hath been herein sung ; that every toil
Of the new fretful generations shall
As our toil seal within the spirit of each
A solace best preserved, not as through sloth
In soft composure of all circumstance
To soothe, but as through ever taking on
Fresh trials and temptations of the world
For resolution in the truth of love.
For only comprehension yieldeth peace
Vital ; and insight is the lamp of love.

LOVE POEMS

XII

THUS, whatsoever may be born in love,
Of love that broods upon the pregnant time,
And by love fitly nurtured, shall be fit
To feel in every fervor of the world,
In wide unrest and infinite desire,
The true infinity of spirit-sense
Appropriating unto self secure
Experience through all environment,
And rendering thereunto fair return
Of furtherance and favor. Such a soul,
Feeling the fever of the world resolved
In mutual comprehension, is at peace.

PATERNALS

XIII

AND thus we (to the love that bore us both
And both begot, each in a time and place
Appropriate, belonging) unto them
Who loved and made us should in thought be turn'd
All-reverential, piously profound
With gratitude for outlook undismay'd
Which sow'd in us the ripening seed of love
And with it peace. That now the seraph-flame
We pass adown the generations, still
Perpetuating by our reverence
The nature of our nurturers. For they
Bore thee to peace ; and me in thy good time.

LOVE POEMS

XIV

YET to the nature of our nurturers
Offering no irony, no simulation
False by the procreation, but a spirit
Of onwardness and outlook vivifying
The vision characteristic and unique
Of earlier parentage. For, though the song
Sings peace, with what song welcomed they the
birth

As it befell — save silently for love ?
And with what worship haply beyond sound,
Yet nowise songless, may the babe to-be
Devise a novel beauty ? — That the way
Of wonder waxeth, though one world endure

PATERNALS

XV

WHEREFORE our absolute serenity,
Sensing before and after, hath a place
Sequent, forereaching ; and the peace we feel,
Foundation even as purpose. — Love, allow
The proved perfection, the finality
Of peace to peace in every peace-fill'd place
By provident conclusion ; and foretell
The plenitude of blessing in the babe
Reactionary on the benison
Of our love, as unto the love of them
Who bore us and begot us did our being
Provide new plenitude where love was full.

LOVE POEMS

XVI

NO need inhereth to our loyal love
Of any infancy to supplement
What of itself hath spirit articulate.
No want of intermediary between
Two souls self-mutual may in any sort
Warrant the procreation. But where love
Is most complete there ever beyond love
Love enters and fulfils. So thou and I
Shall be but more completely in our love
One, by the mediation of the babe
In person of both natures; thine and mine
Of the one essence openly proclaim'd.

PATERNALS

XVII

FOR such they were from first. And such thy song
Hath long proclaim'd them, speaking ever in me ;
Even as the quickening beneath thy breast
Is mine, or brooding of the pregnant time
To thy fulfilment is my spirit in thee :
Two miracles, two benisons alike
Betwixt our beings' mutuality —
My soul and thine, so strange dissimilar
Of fever and of peace, in peace made one :
Both in the babe and, by thee purified,
In this birth-benison of poesy
Offer'd in hope unto thy motherhood.

MEMORIALS

MEMORIALS

I

NOT unto us fulfilment of our hope ;
Not unto us ! But thou and I alone
Face the fair springtide of the outward world
With desolation and bereavement as
An inward winter. Where beneath thy breast
Lay expectation and the seed of the prime
Quickened and quickening with a prophecy,
Remaineth only bitterness. The babe,
Perfected though in thee, in life endured
But one hour's span ; and now beyond all hope
Lieth elsewhere. Therefore now a memory
Alone abideth where our babe had been.

LOVE POEMS

II

NOR unto us false comfort ! For no math
Of after-death might resurrect, restore
A progeny reborn, to welcome us
In worlds beyond the grave. Not unto us
Evasion of the heaviness of loss
As loss is final ! — Yet, if death-despite
Demand regeneration, then within
The spirit be despair redignified :
As we are mortal and can cure death's sting,
As we are earthly and can rob the grave
Of victory (in winter's warranty
Achieving spring !) by proud acknowledgment ! —

MEMORIALS

III

TRUE is it of our babe that he endured
But one hour's span : whereunto every hope
Of world-hours numberless shrank minimized
In vanishment mysterious ; every fear,
Haply of disappointment like our own,
Forever ended. For, in term of him,
The laws and prophecies stand all fulfill'd
To the uttermost ; and nought is any more
Of any universe or soul of his,
Save within memory. And memory
Is grief. And grief is now of thee and me
Alike : though mainly of thy motherhood.

LOVE POEMS

IV

FOR, feel as may the father, he hath borne
No burden hourly waxing more and more
Beneath the breast in quickening. He hath suffer'd
No torture of the agony of birth —
Save if by sympathy. And sympathy
Itself is sweet, assuaging in the soul
Some sense of sorrow. Wherefore to thy sorrow
And pain of thine be our acknowledgment
In praise of thy humanity, in strength
Of that inherent beauty of our being
Which, in ensample of thy character,
Yieldeth a song and makes the springtime proud.

MEMORIALS

V

THY first great suffering, thy first great grief ;
Borne, both, as though the nature of thy soul
Were forthright heroism, nobility
Essential, mounting by the body's pain
To manifestation as of destiny !
Thy spirit unweaken'd of the exhausted frame,
Learning the birth's fatality, at once
Through the strong shock upsprung to power beyond
Mere way of womanhood ; thy mother-love —
Frustrate, prevented — yet enduringly
Awaken'd, pour'd (as to the waiting world
This springtime) on my desolated heart.

LOVE POEMS

VI

SO, for the first fruits of the victory
This soul-deep sympathy ; pain, now in turn,
Made intimate, inwoven ; that our hearts
Even beyond first marriage of our hope
And joy, become by sorrow mutualized,
One woof of recognition — in thy grief
And conquest, mine (the lesser, weaklier grief)
Strengthen'd and purged and purified ; whilst thine
Blooms to an over-brooding providence
Of firmament-creation, resurrection
Evolved from out the grave of birth-and-death,
A spring-world and re-marriage of the soul.

MEMORIALS

VII

Of old, indeed, hath there been to our souls
True marriage, everything of hope and joy,
Love and the life of love-companionship
Our mutual heritage ; but grief and pain
(Save if in pettier purports of an hour)
Have been far from us. Yet a brief hour's span
Hath given us grief unto the end of time
For love's amelioration, for increase
(By depths new-found of spirit-fundament)
Of spirit-intercourse, community
Of love with love within the married soul.
That thou and I by loss have won new worlds.

LOVE POEMS

VIII

SO, to the springtime turn we, inwardly
Feeling the barrenness of winter born
To warranty of world-fecundity.
Ever as in the heavens the loftier sun
Waxes with heat and light, and under him
The birds and blossoms and the gossamer greens
Flourish, and all is foison ; so within
Our warmth of sympathy the season sings
Assurance of our winter and therethrough
Upsprings to heroism, nobility
Born of our understanding, recognition
And proud acknowledgment of mutual pain.

MEMORIALS

IX

AND, if our life be aye experience,
Day by day universal more, more fill'd
Of complication and of cumulance
Which hath but value as we warrant it
By growth in the spirit comprehending each
Entail — so systematic, so enwoof'd
With inference and meaning of the whole ;
If life be soul's-world at unending growth,
Then be this insight of the deeps of soul,
By sorrow won, but in our onwardness
A welcome proof of world-vitality,
A faith and a fulfilment as we live.

LOVE POEMS

X

AN opportunity to prove of soul
Its fair creatorship, its furtherance
Of beauty in reason of bereavement (as
Winter createth spring) involving yet
Subtlier and deeplier the throb of song,
The pulse of art wherewith we tune the world
Best to our image ! And the sun of love,
Ever advancing up the firmament,
Quickens the spirit of earth till birds and trees
Are redolent ; within our soul of grief
A wellspring of creation, thou and I
Onmoving as with cosmic melodies.

MEMORIALS

XI

BEFORE us, then, fresh faith ; beneath thy breast
Not bitterness, but resolution, born
Of power to snatch of death the victory
And face with fearlessness a world beyond
All sting of the grave. Our sorrow's heaviness
But founds more firmly everything of life
Which furnish'd love ; and in the seeds of love
Lie furtherance and foison, plenitude
Of dignity and splendor of increase
Unto the mutual spirit. That thy face
Lifts, from the sun-warm'd earth that holds thy babe,
Unto the sun that holds both babe and thee.

LOVE POEMS

XII

UNTO the sun which thou and I can feel
Above us as within us, all about
In splendor empyrean. For we stand
In meaning of bereavement (as, long since,
One touch of hand to hand reveal'd our love !)
Reveal'd each unto each. And grief-to-grief
Proves spirit-procreation, each in each
An hope, not now solely of sweet and fair,
But of despair, sweetest and fairest yet
Of all love's unionings, an universe
Illumined, yea, and quicken'd through and through
Beneath thy breast and mine in parenthood.

MEMORIALS

XIII

THE parenthood remaineth. Bring we forth
Through the long springtide of a years three-score,
May be, such sweet memorial of our babe
As dignifieth grief in utterance,
As wins a world by comprehension ! Sweet,
Turn to the undertaking of a life,
Fulfilment of a future. Let the hope
Of motherhood, frustrate, prevented now,
Yield fruit of song that, garnering up our griefs,
Soweth them new broadcast upon the earth
Through waiting winters, that a fivefold spring
Revive of beauty in the burden of them.

LOVE POEMS

XIV

FOR all were beauty, sweet, that of thy soul
Is ever born ; for everything of thee
Resembleth thee in truth heroical
And humanism essential. And the world
Hath so a tale of splendor, character
Establish'd at the acme, and a song
Made ready to its heart beyond all song !
Let me be but thy poet (as the spring
Floodeth with melody this winter's-world)
Enunciating soul's experience
Of thee with understanding at the heart
Of grief within thee and the grace of grief.

MEMORIALS

XV

GRIEF have I sung erstwhile ; yet never grief
With thee to listen as thou listenest ;
Never ere now a grief far more than shared,
Ennobled and enraptured by a love
Surpassing intimation. Though I sing
Supported now by hourly intercourse
And promptings of thy presence, yet the song —
So dubious of the dream that grief's mere grief,
So wondering at sympathy too sweet ! —
Perchance may prove, not as my former song,
Too little sorrowful, too joy'd of thee :
That loss-acknowledgment itself seem lost ?

LOVE POEMS

XVI

AND then were springtime meaningless, our loss
No winter quickening the spirit-world
To splendors firmamental, nor no life
Of after-death achieved here upon earth,
Nor resurrection out of memory
To welcome us of progeny reborn —
As promised of the proud acknowledgment !
Dear heart, forgive ! I have not yet forgot
The patient motherhood, the burden borne
Nor pangs of the birth. But, loving thee so much,
I, hand-in-hand with thee, can but look forth
To see the spring ; and sing of that I see.

MEMORIALS

XVII

NOR is the babe forgotten. Sun-warm'd earth,
Somewhere that we may kneel and stoop to it,
Holds him who was hope's heritage ; and birds
Sing over him, and greenery about
Breathes of the light. But thou and I must turn
Back to ourselves that we may learn of loss
The sweet flower-secret : seeds and sorrowing
Of wintriness to give the world a grave
Under the springtime. Dear, with me arise,
Take up the world-work that the world may learn
Of motherhood divine, as by thee shown
Evangel : me, thy priest beside thy feet !

MISCELLANEOUS SONNETS

MISCELLANEOUS SONNETS

BECAUSE OF A LADY IN ROME

“ *Quo vadis?* Soul ! who in earth’s utmost parts
“ Hast visaged martyrdom so many ways,
“ Where goest ? Why toward earth’s Heart of Hearts
“ Hastest with question in thy desperate gaze ?
“ What answer wouldst thou seek ? Wast not sore tried
“ An hundred times and soil’d with shame enow ?
“ Art dreaming of thy crown : that at earth’s Pride
“ Thou knockest, with that desolate, ‘ Open Thou ! ’ ?

“ Yea, ’t is the Roman road ! I take of thee
“ Thy tragic meaning ere the truth be said :
“ Life-hunger of the heart that would but be
“ Agonized, ay, liefer than dwell for dead
“ Unloving as unloved ! ” — The spirit sigh’d :
“ I come, but once more to be crucified.”

LOVE POEMS

SONG OF THE TABERNACLE

BELOVÈD, above the wonder of thy brow
Behold the cherubim, on either hand,
Wrapp'd in the cloudy promise of command,
The presence of Jehovah and the vow :
'Ye are my chosen people' ! And below
The lambent wings an ever-burning brand
(Between them, where the mercy-seat would stand)
Lucent intensely — heatless yet as snow !

Fair keeper of the covenant, dear ark
Of my commandments ! in thine honor'd face
Are silent splendor and a prophecy
Vouchsafed, unspoken. — Shall mine heart (who see !)
BlaspHEME importunate thy patient place :
Faithless as one who waiteth in the dark ?

MISCELLANEOUS SONNETS

SOUL-CYCLE

SEA-HOURS there are, beloved, when from the heart
(Ah ! glad relief to love's insistencies !)
Updrawn and of its substance griefs arise,
Soothing our wide unrest with cooling art :
Self-protestations of our deeper part
Whose peace is ever troubled from the skies ;
And whelm and swoon upon us and demise
Fresh strength for sufferance to ease our smart.

Thus o'er the weltering of ocean's power
Yon crownèd clouds, the wing'd spring-harbingers,
Horizon-sprung rear sunward overarch'd ;
Empurpling, shadowy, the glistening hour ;
And rain purgation by bequest perverse :
Waters, to waters that themselves are parch'd.

LOVE POEMS

TO JANE ON A JOURNEY

UNTO an isle of the Hesperides
Thou guidest me ; and there a garden showest
Rich with enchantment of all wonder-trees
Of flower and fruit, where loftiest and lowest
Alike exhale an honey-scented breeze
Bird-redolent with music. Thou bestowest
Also this sun's serene benignities
Upon the ancient darkness that thou knowest. —

The ancient barrenness ! — I greet thy garden
With sense of rescue from the salt-sea wave ;
With salutation ; but with prayer for pardon
That I received more greatly than I gave.
Yet, being compassion'd, might a mere man harden
His heart to rob thee of thy right to save ?

MISCELLANEOUS SONNETS

TO JANE AT HOME

LOVE ! whilst the hours away thou softly sleepest
Lull'd by the wildering of the rain without,
And the dear secret of thy dreams still keepest
And what thy breath doth busy thee about :
Behold, I anguish, deeplier yet and deepest
Searching the centre with the soul of doubt —
Till into my perplexity thou leapest
With sudden love, and turn'st the tempter out !

Mute preacher ! thou, beyond the waking power
Of proof or dogma, proselytest faith !
High dreamer, who to dream away an hour
Savest a soul ! — The very storm-wind saith
Peace. And the petulance of the passing shower
Speaks the serenity within thy breath.

LOVE POEMS

TO JANE IN ABSENCE

I

LIFELESS the day without or sound or sight
Of thee, belovèd ! Every sunniest thing,
These myriad-musick'd voices of the spring,
But darkness and a silence ! Earth's delight
Is vacant of mine heart's prerequisite
And cannot thrill me though creation ring —
Day and the vault of air fore-echoing
Chiefly thy lonely chamber and the night.

Empty the day, and night yet emptiest !
But with the long'd-for coming of the morn
Neareth the moment of an earth reborn
To rapture of thy presence ! — Wouldst thou rest
All-time at home, ne'er were our life forlorn.
But death — then resurrection : these are best.

MISCELLANEOUS SONNETS

TO JANE IN ABSENCE

II

AND truly I see and hear thee overall
And everywhile, an immanence benign
Of faith, an immortality divine
Believed-in, and an hope millennial
To bear me up in wisdom lest I fall
Along this ill-illumined hour of mine :
Which, wanting thee, in each least guiding line
Lacks for thy law responsive at the call.

So, dear, I see thee where thy feet have trod
The turf to sudden flowers ; where thy voice
Led on the woodland choirs to rejoice
Hear I thy presence as a causal god.
So, though to bide afar be now thy choice,
Need love be blinder than thy meanest clod ?

LOVE POEMS

TO JANE IN SICKNESS

LOVE, all the night-long hath thy fever'd brain
Prevented sleep ; whilst I in impotence
Of sympathy (distraught for Why or Whence),
Helpless to heal have watch'd with thee in vain.
And thou, throughout thy suffering, hast lain
Grateful at each crude aid's impertinence ;
Wishful, if but for care's love-inference,
Almost that misery might never wane.

Though now the soul-hour passes ; for the day
Comes unto thee with promise of relief
In sweet sleep-prophecy. And I my way
Take up with somewhat of a sense of grief
Because the night is gone — but bearing hence
The secret of the Mystery of Pain.

MISCELLANEOUS SONNETS

ON MY CHILD

ONE hour of birth and death ; and then no more.
All the world's wonders multitudinous,
Its mysteries and meanings marvellous
Summ'd in a breath, a cry : and all is o'er,
A sleep and a forgetting as before :
A wonder and a void mysterious
Of loss and grief unto the hopes of us,
The love that form'd him and the pains that bore.

Yet hath there been unto the sum of life
A meaning added and a truth begun
In virtue of bereavement : to a wife
The marvel of a motherhood ; to me
An unforgetting — who still hear and see
Ever the breath and heart-beat of a son.

LOVE POEMS

TO JANE: IN CONFESSION

LO! I have sinn'd against thee. For my speech
Offendeth thee and bringeth to thine eyes
Scorn with distress: that our complacencies
Are troubled, and within the heart of each
Is bitterness. E'en though I may beseech
Forgiveness, for just cause thy charities
Are frozen at the fount. So in no wise
Thy tenderness can my contrition reach.

But then the melting — in thy tears of ruth
My spirit rapt away and soft embalm'd,
Wash'd all but stainless of the taint of shame,
Despite transgression. And with me the blame
Ta'en to thyself! — That, now our hearts are calm'd,
Write I this song: to register the truth.

MISCELLANEOUS SONNETS

TO JANE: IN TEMPTATION

BELOVÈD, almost I hope I may die first
Before thee. The bare dread of life-alone
Impairs in me some sweetness of our own
Life-comradeship, anticipates the worst,
And well-nigh alters to a fear accurst
Our reälized elysium. — Thou hast shown
What life is. Liefer far death's fate-unknown
Than death-in-life more certain-felt than erst.

Belovèd, almost I hope I first may die
And leave to thee the deathliness I dread —
I heartlessly invoking on thy head
The doom thy deathless love devotedly
Hath from my heart averted ! — Shall the dead
Deserve thy hate : that, living, love as I ?

LOVE POEMS

CONSUMMATION

NOT alway thus unto a man is given
The complementation of a womanhood —
Save as she still excels, in every mood
His mate. Not alway hath the spirit striven
With sinwardness' self-hatred, inly riven
Beyond all finite peace — yet straightway stood
Within the very paradise of good,
Grasp'd in an infinite grace, confess'd and shriven.

Not alway thus : but only unto him
Who in the lonely longing steadfastly
Hath not despair'd of love ; who, stern with fate,
Held through the darkness with insistence grim
The vision as of saviorhood by thee.
He only yieldeth womanhood a mate.

MISCELLANEOUS SONNETS

SUNION

I

ABOVE the breadth of old Poseidon's blue
Upstairs a promontory, gaunt and gray,
With brow grim-beetling. Ever far away
Loom the dim lands of men ; that very few
May chance to visit it. But thereunto
Repair the airs of heaven ; the sun by day
And stars at eve ; or oftentime may stay
A delicate mist (whenas the moon is new)
Momently on its summit. And the hand
Of hope hath heap'd unto the sea-god's might
An altar there in marvel ; and thereo'er
Are wind-worn columns crumbling icy-white
And wonderful, whose tops the sea-birds bore.
And priests have pray'd there in an awesome band.

LOVE POEMS

SUNION

II

PRAY'D — scarce in vain. For to that loneliest spot
Of elemental grandeur, at the prayer,
Hath come divine response and rested there
With promise of fulfilment unforgot.
Not as the evanescent mists, and not
As sea-birds hovering in the homeless air,
But as the circumambience everywhere
Of ocean hath come godship to my lot.
Within my heart divinity who find
No more unto Poseidon need I vow !
Who feel the sea-god in the souls of both,
To us eternally auspicious now ! —
Belovèd, for thine the altar of our troth
High in the ice-white temple of the mind !

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